

# SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2010

## Comprehensive Plan

St. Charles Parish has been working on a Comprehensive Plan over the past year. This Comprehensive Plan creates a “blueprint” for future growth, development and redevelopment based on how the citizens want the parish to look over the next 20 years. The Comprehensive Plan will address parish-wide issues such as infrastructure, housing, economic development, land use, parks and open space, community facilities and transportation.

The parish has been working with consultants, Wallace, Roberts and Todd (WRT), the Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX), a citizen-based Steering Committee, and the public over the past year to create a Vision Statement, Future Land Use Map, and policies and action items based on the issues listed above.

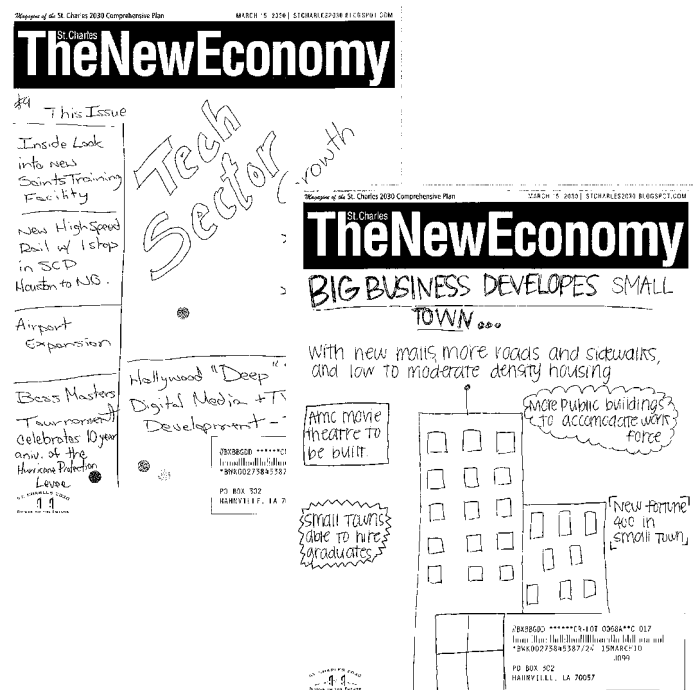


## Public Meetings

In August through October of 2009, St. Charles Parish held the first series of public meetings. Overall, 12 public meetings were held throughout the parish to identify the parish’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Nearly 500 people participated in this series of workshops, including 150 students. This information was then used by the Steering Committee to create the Vision Statement, that is the guide for the rest of the document.

St. Charles Parish held another set of public meetings in March 2010 to get input from the community on what they envision St. Charles Parish should look like within the next 20 years. During these meetings, community

members were asked to rank their priorities for economic development and land use, vote on their visual preferences for future development types, create future headlines for the parish’s economic development, and draw future land use desires on a parish-wide map. In addition, an online survey was made available for those who could not come to meetings. Approximately 250 persons participated in the meetings or took the online survey.



Preferences were identified by participants using the vision statement as their starting point, and prioritizing development options. Additionally, maps illustrating existing land use and zoning, and current status of sites allowed citizens to guide the consultants and build the foundation for future land use maps and goals, policies and actions.





## Community Input Summary

Top Land Use and Development Priorities Identified in the Public Meetings (in order):

- Technology Parks
- Light Industry
- Offices
- Single family housing (detached and attached)
- Local-serving retail (groceries, dry cleaners, pharmacy, hair salon, etc.)
- Senior housing (senior community, group living facility)

Top Economic Development Priorities Identified in the Public Meetings (in order):

- Improve hurricane flooding and protection
- Diversify local economy
- Expand training and other educational opportunities
- Encourage community revitalization/beautification efforts
- Focus on the following economic sectors:
  - Light manufacturing
  - Research and development
  - Information/technology
  - Tourism (historical, ecological, recreational)
  - Government, education, medical and health services

## Resulting Plan Elements

The Steering Committee, which is the sounding board for the consultants made up of community members, is currently working with the consultants to develop a policy framework that will serve as the basis of the plan elements. Each topic of the policy framework (Land Use and Development, Economic Development, etc.) is based on the Vision Statement, community input, and existing plans, and is intended to contribute to making St. Charles Parish more livable, more resilient, and more adaptable to changing conditions in the future.

## Next Public Meetings

Keep your eyes out for the next series of public meetings in the fall! During these meetings, we will be asking you to give us feedback on the policies recommended under each plan topic and the Future Land Use Map. The map will depict the parish's future pattern of land uses and will serve as a guide for future development and redevelopment decisions. The map will also reflect how residents indicated they wanted the parish to grow. The map will be circulated for 30 days prior to the next round of meetings for your review. Your input is critical to the success of this project so we hope to see you at these public meetings in the fall!

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